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ABSTRACT

This is part two of a teaching module designed for use in undergraduate and graduate courses in early childhood, reading, children's literature and special education, and for in-service courses for paraprofessionals. This section specifies videotape pre-assessment and post-assessment sessions, and contains three instructional elements, assessment scales to accompany the elements, and self-checking answer keys for these scales. (MB)

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INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

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READING ALOUD TO CHILDREN

HELEN CONSTANT

RICHMOND COLLEGE

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WHAT IS COMPETENCY-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION?

The set of materials you are about to begin using represents a new direction in teacher education. Called competency-based teacher education, this approach to training teachers emphasizes the teacher's performance--what he or she is actually able to do as the result of acquiring certain knowledge or skills.

Performance in a specific area is referred to as a competency. Thus, what we expect the teacher to be like after completing his education can be described in terms of the competencies he should have. The emphasis is on doing rather than on knowing, though performance is frequently the result of knowledge.

This shift in emphasis from knowing to doing accounts, to a great extent, for the differences you will notice in the format and content of these materials. To begin with, the set of materials itself is called a module because it is thought of as one part of an entire system of instruction. The focus has been narrowed to one competency or to a small group of closely related competencies. The ultimate aim of the module is expressed as a terminal objective, a statement describing what you, the teacher, should be able to do as a result of successfully completing this module.

Your final performance, however, can usually be broken down into a series of smaller, more specific objectives. As you achieve each of these, you are taking a step toward fulfilling the ultimate goal of the module. Each intermediate objective is the focus of a group of activities designed to enable you to reach that objective.

Together, the activities that make up each element, or part, of the module enable you to achieve the terminal objective.

There are several kinds of objectives, depending on what kind of performance is being demanded of you. For example, in a cognitive-based objective, the emphasis is on what you know. But since these are behavioral objectives, what you know can only be determined overtly. An objective can only be stated in terms of your behavior--what you can do. You might, for instance, be asked to demonstrate your knowledge of a subject by performing certain tasks, such as correctly completing arithmetic problems or matching words and definitions. In addition to cognitive-based objectives, there are performance-based objectives, where the criterion is your actual skill in carrying out a task; consequence-based objectives, for which your success in teaching something to someone else is measured; and exploratory objectives, which are open-ended, inviting you to investigate certain questions in an unstructured way.

Along with the assumption that the competencies, or behaviors, that make for successful teaching can be identified goes the assumption that these competencies can be assessed in some way. In fact, the statement of objectives and the development of assessment procedures form the main thrust of competency-based teacher education. The module, and the activities it contains or prescribes, is just a way of implementing the objectives.

But the module does have certain advantages as an instructional tool. For one thing, it enables you to work on your own and at your own pace. The activities are usually varied so that you can

select those which are best suited to your learning style. And the module enables you to cover certain subject areas with maximum efficiency; since if you pass the pre-assessment for a given objective, you are exempted from the module implementing that objective. What matters is not the amount of classroom time you put in on a subject but your ability to demonstrate certain competencies, or behaviors.

OVERVIEW

Why learn what seems to be such a simple skill as reading aloud? If you are already planning to work with young children--preschoolers through the third grade--you know that reading aloud is part of every school day. Your answer to the question might then be, "If I have to do something every day, I might as well learn how to do it well." If you already practice teaching, if you work in a day care center or a school for special children, if you are a paraprofessional assisting in a K-3 program, you also know that story time can be a magic time when restlessness can cease, short tempers have time to grow long again, and, most important, a certain wonder can come into a child's eyes. You've seen it happen; you may have created this effect once or twice yourself. If you have, you'll want to be able to read effectively all the time. You'll want to help make sure that the wonder shines through every time. For it is this wonder that is the purpose of reading aloud. This wonder is the listener's reaction to the impact of literature--the impact that a good story has had for human ears and human minds since the first story-teller caught the first listener in a magic net of sounds and images.

Prerequisites

You should be a student teacher--either on the undergraduate or the graduate level--doing practice teaching in a kindergarten or elementary school. If you are not a student teacher, you should at least have access to groups of children of this age--by helping out in a library story hour, for example.

A specialty in early childhood education is not necessary in order to take this module, nor is it essential that you be working in a traditional school in order to benefit from the acquisition of the skill. The techniques of reading aloud to children that you will demonstrate or acquire in the course of this module are necessary for people who work in libraries and day care centers as well as schools and for teachers of special children as well as teachers of the average child.

How to Take This Module

Now that you have read the overview and the prerequisites, you can decide whether or not you want to go ahead with this module. To help you make this decision an informed one, you should also realize that this module will take no more than 8 hours.

If you continue, you will be asked to complete three basic steps: the pre-assessment, three instructional elements, and a post-assessment.

The pre-assessment for this module consists of a videotape of you reading aloud to children. If you and your instructor decide that your performance meets certain predetermined critieria,

you can exit the module. You will have demonstrated that you already possess the skill that is the terminal objective of this module. In other words, success on the pre-assessment indicates that you don't need this module.

However, don't regard lack of success on the pre-assessment as failure. It is simply an indication of the fact that you need the information and insights you will gain from taking this module. If you feel that you have much to learn about this skill before making a video tape, you may decide to eliminate the pre-assessment and enter the module at the second step--the instructional elements themselves. Each element has its own objective and, together, these objectives make up the terminal objective of this module:

> You will be able to read a story aloud to a group of children to meet a criterion level of 80% on Assessment Scale A.

Let's look at the three Elements in more detail.

Element I (page 13) consists of three alternatives from which you must choose one:

1. Reading articles and answering questions about the reading.
2. Viewing a film and evaluating what you have seen.
3. Observing and evaluating a librarian's skill in reading aloud during a library story hour.

When you have successfully completed one of these alternatives, you may go on to Element II.

Element II (page 25) consists of viewing a videotape of student teachers reading aloud to children. You will evaluate

their performance with a peer, then discuss your evaluation with a peer group and your instructor. After completing this element successfully, you can then go on to the final element.

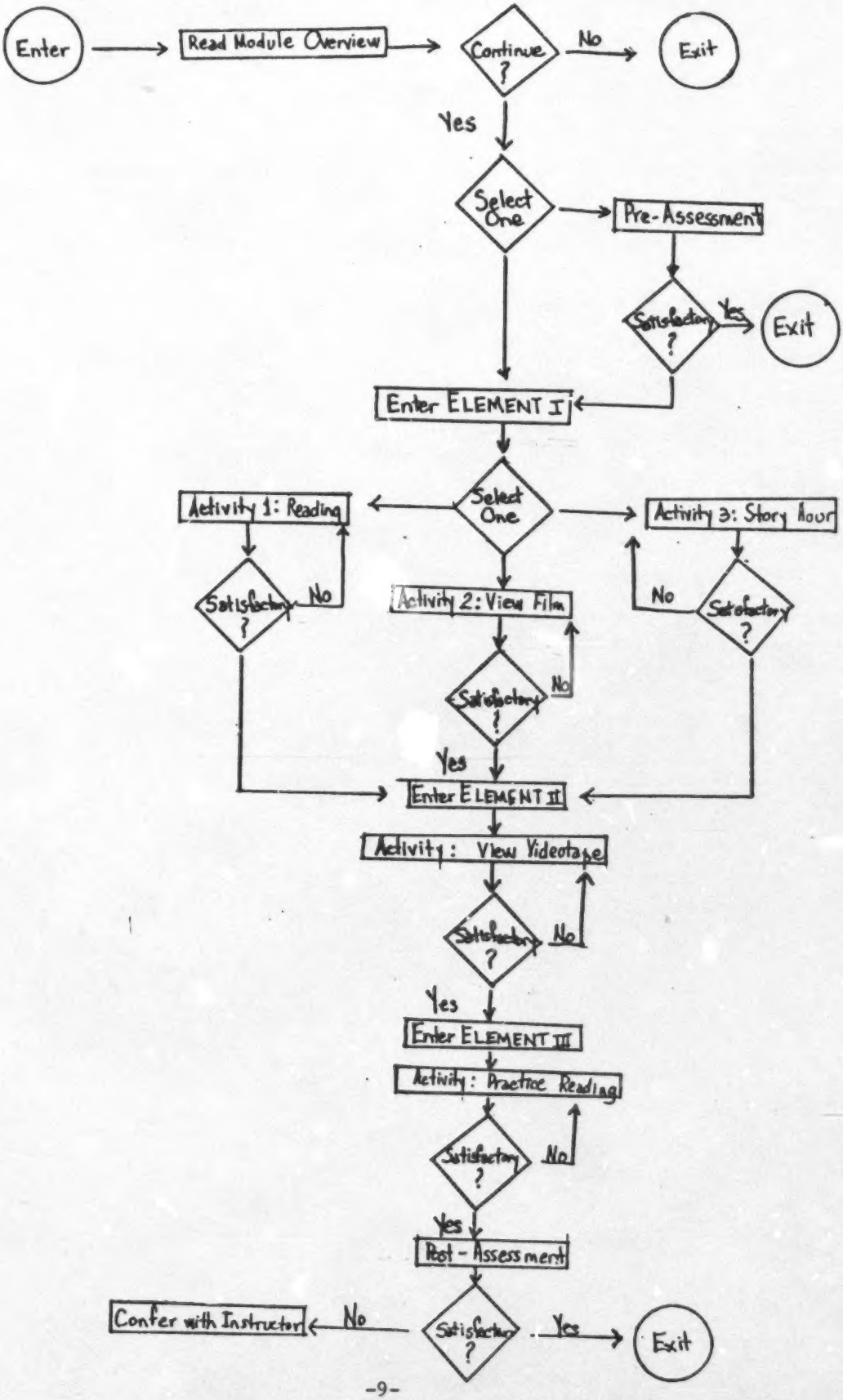
Element III (page 32) is a practice session. You will read a story aloud to your peers, who will evaluate your performance according to specific criteria. If you successfully complete this element, you are ready for the post-assessment.

If at any time you fail to complete an element successfully according to the criteria, you should reenter the element and try again. If you still do not succeed after the second try, your instructor will suggest the next step or you may elect to exit.

The post-assessment, like the pre-assessment, consists of a videotape of you reading a story aloud to children. Again, your performance will be evaluated, and if you successfully meet the assessment standard, you will have demonstrated that you now possess the skill that is the terminal objective of this module, and you may exit.

If you do not meet the criteria, you may reenter the module, or confer with your instructor about an alternate procedure.

Before entering the module, you might want to take a look at the flow chart on pages 8-9, which outlines in graphic form the steps you must follow in going through this module. You can then turn to page 10 for the directions about the pre-assessment. If you decide not to take the pre-assessment, turn to page 13, Element I and choose one of the alternate activities.


Enter
Read Module Overview
Continue ?
No
Exit
Yes
Select One
Pre-Assessment
Satisfactory ?
Yes
Exit
Enter ELEMENT I
Select One
Activity 1: Reading
Satisfactory ?
No
Activity 2: View Film
Satisfactory ?
No
Activity 3: Story Hour
No
Satisfactory ?
Yes
Enter ELEMENT II
Activity: View Videotape
Satisfactory ?
No
Yes
Enter ELEMENT III
Activity: Practice Reading
Satisfactory ?
No
Yes
Post-Assessment
Satisfactory ?
No
Confer with Instructor
Yes
Exit

PRE-ASSESSMENT

Arrange to have a viedotape made of you reading a story aloud to children, either in the school you teach in, at a day-care center, a library, or wherever it is convenient for you.

Next, meet with your instructor to evaluate your performance. Check off the answers--yes or no--on Assessment Scale A on the following page. Your instructor will also rate you. Each yes answer is worth 5 points, and if you and your instructor agree that your score is 80% or above, you may exit this module. You will have demonstrated that you already possess the skill that is the terminal objective of this module.

If you did not score 80%, don't be discouraged. It just means that you can make use of the concepts and experiences that you will gain while taking this module. Turn to page 13 and choose one activity from Element I.

ASSESSMENT SCALE A

Since the scale will be used to assess the work of others as well as your own work, it is written in the third person. Consider yourself the "student" when you are rating yourself.

	Check One	
	Yes	No
A. The Setting		
1. Does the student seat herself close to the children during the story time?		
2. Has the student arranged the seating so that all the children can view the illustrations comfortably?		
3. Has the student designed an attractive reading display?		
B. The Reading Process		
1. Does the student read the story without stumbling or hesitating?		
2. Does the student look at the children while reading?		
3. Does the student explain at least one word to the children that he/she thinks may be unfamiliar to them?		
4. Is the student able to read the story at the same time allowing the children to view the illustrations?		
5. Does the student read at a pace that enhances listening?		
6. Does the student hold the children's attention during the reading?		
7. Is the student able to regain the attention of any child who has become distracted during the reading?		

	Check One	
	Yes	No
C. Speech, Voice, and Language		
1. Does the student pronounce his/her words clearly?		
2. Is the student's tone pleasant?		
3. Does the student project his/her voice so as to be heard by all the children?		
4. Does the student follow the rhythm of the language and capture the mood of the story?		
5. Does the student change his/her voice to fit that of the imaginary characters?		
6. Does the student encourage the children to become involved in the story by accepting their contributions, either as remarks or as repetition of common phrases?		
D. Critical Thinking		
1. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the title of the story?		
2. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the plot of the story?		
3. Does the student ask the children to project future happenings in the story?		
4. Does the student ask the children to react to the story?		

ELEMENT I

Objective:

After reading two articles, viewing a film, or observing a librarian's story hour, you will accurately describe, according to specified criteria, what preparation is necessary before reading aloud to children, what things a reader must be aware of while reading, and what some of the reasons are for reading aloud to children.

This element consists of three alternative activities. You are to choose one to work on. If you meet the assessment criteria for the activity, you may go on to Element II. Before you decide which activity to choose, read them over carefully to see what you need in order to complete each one. Activity 1 consists of reading two articles which are printed in the Appendix and answering questions about what you have read. Activity 2 consists of viewing a film and answering questions about it. Activity 3 is a field activity and requires you to work with a peer in observing and evaluating a librarian's story hour performance.

Activity 1

This activity consists of reading two selections and answering questions about what you have read. The two selections--Arbuthnot's excerpt "How to Read Stories Aloud" and Vandergrift's "Reading Aloud to Young Children"--are in the Appendix (pages 44-50). While you are reading these selections, you should note what each says about

reasons for reading to children
techniques of reading
ways of selecting stories
clarifying new words and concepts
seating arrangements
handling children's restlessness

When you have finished the reading, think about what you have just read, then answer the questions on Assessment Scale B. (You may write in this booklet.) Check your answers by turning to the Answer Key for that scale (page 39 in the Appendix). Then score yourself, following the instructions on the scale. If you score 80% or above, you have successfully completed this activity. You can now go on to Element II (page 25).

If you score less than 80%, wait two days, then read the selections again and score yourself again. If you still have not reached the mastery score, go to your instructor for help.

ASSESSMENT SCALE B

The following scale has been devised to evaluate your understanding of the articles "How to Read Stories Aloud" and "Reading Aloud to Young Children." You will receive 4 points for each part of the question that you answer correctly. For example, in Question A, you will receive 4 points for each of the six correct responses. If you answer each part correctly, you will receive a total of 24 points. If you score 80% or higher on the total test, you have completed this activity.

A. Give 6 reasons why you should read stories aloud to children. (None of the answers that you give can be used when answering Question B).

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

B. You should select stories to read to children that

1.

2.

C. The three factors determining whether stories should be read or told to children are

1.

2.

3.

D. When reading stories to children, you should use your voice to

1.

2.

3.

4.

E. When reading to children, you should be seated in such a way that the children are

1.

2.

F. Before reading a story to the children, be sure that you explain

1.

2.

G. In order to get a child's attention who becomes restless during the reading session, you should do one or more of the followirg:

1.

2.

3.

H. If the children become excited by the story and start commenting, you should

1.

I. The time that stories should be read to children is either

1.

2.

Activity 2

The film around which this activity revolves is "The Pleasure Is Mutual," produced by the Westchester Library System of New York, and distributed by Children's Book Council, 175 5th Avenue. It is a 16mm sound-color film that runs 24 minutes and is available for rental.

In the film both librarians and teachers in day-care centers read stories to children. The title is quite appropriate since both the readers and the children seem to be having a mutually enjoyable experience. As you view the film, look at the expressions on the faces of the teachers and children. Also notice the seating arrangement, listen to the voices of the readers, note the way they weave the comments of the children into the story. Watch how they hold the books, and look at the size of the illustrations. Observe the way that they introduce the story to the children and the way that they bring the experience to a conclusion.

After you have viewed the film, answer the questions on Assessment Scale C. Check your answers by turning to the answer key on page 41. Then score yourself by following the instructions on the scale. If you score 80% or above, you have successfully completed this activity. You can now go on to Element II (page 25).

If you score less than 80%, wait two days, then view the film and score yourself again. If you have still not reached the mastery score, go to your instructor for help.

ASSESSMENT SCALE C

The following scale has been devised to evaluate your observation of the film, "The Pleasure Is Mutual." You will receive 5 points for each part of the question that you answer correctly. For example, in Question A, you will receive 5 points for each of the three correct responses. If you answer each part correctly, you will receive a total of 15 points. If you score 80% or higher on the total test, you have completed this activity.

A. Give three reasons why the teacher should know the story well enough so that she is not completely dependent upon the book when reading.

1.

2.

3.

B. For a reading experience to be superior, it is important that the reader's voice be pleasant and well modulated. In general, how would you appraise the voices of the several readers?

C. Give two criteria that the reader must look for in the composition of the story when selecting books for young children.

1.

2.

D. According to the film, there are three types of books that a teacher (librarian) can choose for children. Name them.

1.

2.

3.

E. Before reading the story to the children, the teacher (librarian) must not only practice reading expressively but must learn to handle two technical elements as well. Name them.

1.

2.

F. According to the film, name the three ways that a teacher introduces stories to children.

1.

2.

3.

G. Many teachers end their stories by asking the question, "How did you like it?" Do you think that this is a good ending? Comment.

H. The most important time in story hour is the 10 or 15 minute time period following the reading of the story. Name the two things that should occur then.

1.

2.

I. How many minutes long should the reading program be for 3-year-olds?

J. How long should it be for 5-year-olds?

K. What is the largest number of children that a teacher should read to at one sitting?

Activity 3

This activity involves observing and evaluating a librarian's performance in reading aloud to children during a story hour. You will use Assessment Scale A again, which you may have used to evaluate your own performance in the pre-assessment. The scale is reprinted for you on the following page. Before you can complete this activity, however, you must do two things:

1. make arrangements with a library of your choice to come in and observe the story hour
2. choose two peers with whom to work so that you can confirm the accuracy of your evaluation by cross-checking.

When you have done all this, attend the story hour with your peers and fill out the evaluation sheet. Then compare your ratings with those of your peers. If the ratings agree, then you have demonstrated an understanding of what goes into a good reading performance and you have completed this activity. You may now go on to Element II.

If the ratings differ markedly, the three of you should visit another librarian's story hour and see how the new ratings compare. If there is still a great divergence, see your instructor to resolve the conflict.

ASSESSMENT SCALE A

You will be using the scale this time to evaluate the reading performance of someone else. Check off yes or no to each question as you observe the reading. Score 5 points for each yes answer. Total the score, then compare scores with your peers.

	Check One	
	Yes	No
A. The Setting		
1. Does the student seat herself close to the children during the story time?		
2. Has the student arranged the seating so that all the children can view the illustrations comfortably?		
3. Has the student designed an attractive reading display?		
B. The Reading Process		
1. Does the student read the story without stumbling or hesitating?		
2. Does the student look at the children while reading?		
3. Does the student explain at least one word to the children that he/she thinks may be unfamiliar to them?		
4. Is the student able to read the story at the same time allowing the children to view the illustrations?		
5. Does the student read at a pace that enhances listening?		
6. Does the student hold the children's attention during the reading?		
7. Is the student able to regain the attention of any child who has become distracted during the reading?		

	Check One	
	Yes	No
C. Speech, Voice, and Language		
1. Does the student pronounce his/her words clearly?		
2. Is the student's tone pleasant?		
3. Does the student project his/her voice so as to be heard by all the children.		
4. Does the student follow the rhythm of the language and capture the mood of the story?		
5. Does the student change his/her voice to fit that of the imaginary characters?		
6. Does the student encourage the children to become involved in the story by accepting their contributions, either as remarks or as repetition of common phrases?		
D. Critical Thinking		
1. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the title of the story?		
2. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the plot of the story?		
3. Does the student ask the children to project future happenings in the story?		
4. Does the student ask the children to react to the story?		

ELEMENT II

Objective:

After viewing a videotape of student teachers reading aloud to children, you will accurately evaluate their performance using an assessment scale that measures the environment in which the story was read, the teacher's presentation, and the reaction and behavior of the children.

Activity

There is only one activity in this element--viewing a videotape of student teachers reading aloud to children and evaluating their performance. You will be measuring the performance of others in order to help you understand both what you should do and what you shouldn't do while reading aloud to children. You will be using Assessment Scale A, printed on pages 28-31, and you will need to work with a small group of peers so that you can confirm the accuracy of your evaluation by cross-checking.

Before you can complete this activity, then, you must do two things:

1. choose a small group of peers--at least two others--with whom to work
2. make arrangements to view the videotape.

After you have done this, read over the following list of things to think about while you are viewing:

A. The Physical Elements

1. the seating arrangement of the teachers and children
2. the teacher's manner of holding the storybooks
3. the teacher's dependence upon the book for the reading
4. the size of the book and illustrations
5. the expressions on the faces of the teachers and children
6. the teacher's use of hand gestures.

B. The Handling of the Storybook Experience

1. the manner of introducing the book
2. the teacher's comments during the reading of the story
3. the teacher's handling of student comments during the reading of the story
4. the types of questions asked--simple recall vs. critical thinking
5. the predominance of "what" or "how" and "why" questions
6. the follow-up activities upon completion of the story.

C. Discipline

1. the teacher's technique in getting the children interested in listening to the story
2. the techniques used to get the children back into the story when they begin to become inattentive.

The videotape is in two parts (A and B). You should view both parts at the same time, but you may view them separately, if it is more convenient.

Now view the tapes and evaluate each teacher's performance. (Since there are two student teachers, the Assessment scale is printed twice for you.) Compare your rating with your peers. If the ratings agree, then you have demonstrated an ability to identify what is good and bad in someone's reading performance and you may now go on to Element III.

If the ratings differ markedly, you may want to veiw the tapes again after discussing the performances. Then redo your assessment scale and compare ratings again. If you do not reach a consensus, ask your instructor to resolve the conflict.

ASSESSMENT SCALE

	Check one	
	Yes	No
A. The Setting		
1. Does the student seat herself close to the children during the story time?		
2. Has the student arranged the seating so that all the children can view the illustrations comfortably?		
3. Has the student designed an attractive reading display?		
B. The Reading Process		
1. Does the student read the story without stumbling or hesitating?		
2. Does the student look at the children while reading?		
3. Does the student explain at least one word to the children that he/she thinks may be unfamiliar to them?		
4. Is the student able to read the story at the same time allowing the children to view the illustrations?		
5. Does the student read at a pace that enhances listening?		
6. Does the student hold the children's attention during the reading?		
7. Is the student able to regain the attention of any child who has become distracted during the reading?		
C. Speech, Voice, and Language		
1. Does the student pronounce his/her words clearly?		

	Check one	
	Yes	No
2. Is the student's tone pleasant?		
3. Does the student project his/her voice so as to be heard by all the children?		
4. Does the student follow the rhythm of the language and capture the mood of the story?		
5. Does the student change his/her voice to fit that of the imaginary characters?		
6. Does the student encourage the children to become involved in the story by accepting their contributions, either as remarks or as repetition of common phrases?		

D. Critical Thinking

1. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the title of the story?		
2. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the plot of the story?		
3. Does the student ask the children to project future happenings in the story?		
4. Does the student ask the children to react to the story?		

ASSESSMENT SCALE

	Check one	
	Yes	No
A. The Setting		
1. Does the student seat herself close to the children during the story time?		
2. Has the student arranged the seating so that all the children can view the illustrations comfortably?		
3. Has the student designed an attractive reading display?		
B. The Reading Process		
1. Does the student read the story without stumbling or hesitating?		
2. Does the student look at the children while reading?		
3. Does the student explain at least one word to the children that he/she thinks may be unfamiliar to them?		
4. Is the student able to read the story at the same time allowing the children to view the illustrations?		
5. Does the student read at a pace that enhances listening?		
6. Does the student hold the children's attention during the reading?		
7. Is the student able to regain the attention of any child who has become distracted during the reading?		
C. Speech, Voice, and Language		
1. Does the student pronounce his/her words clearly?		

	Check one	
	Yes	No
2. Is the student's tone pleasant?		
3. Does the student project his/her voice so as to be heard by all the children?		
4. Does the student follow the rhythm of the language and capture the mood of the story?		
5. Does the student change his/her voice to fit that of the imaginary characters?		
6. Does the student encourage the children to become involved in the story by accepting their contributions, either as remarks or as repetition of common phrases?		

D. Critical Thinking

1. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the title of the story?		
2. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the plot of the story?		
3. Does the student ask the children to project future happenings in the story?		
4. Does the student ask the children to react to the story?		

ELEMENT III

Objective:

You will demonstrate that you possess some of the techniques of good story reading by achieving a score of 80% on an assessment scale that measures your performance while reading a story aloud to a group of peers.

Activity

The single activity in this element consists of your reading a story to a group of peers. Consider it a practice session for the post-assessment in which you make a videotape of your reading aloud to a group of children. Since your audience this time will be peers, you will not have to deal with quite as many problems as you would when working with children. This should give you time to polish your performance by concentrating on your voice and your language.

You may use the same group of peers that you have been working with before. If you have been working with only two others, you might want to increase the group by two so that you can have one pair act as audience and the other act as the evaluation team.

Choose a story you know fairly well, practice reading it aloud to yourself a few times, then read it to your peer audience. The observer team will evaluate you, using Assessment Scale A (page 34). Then switch roles and participate first as part of

the audience and then as part of the evaluation team until all of the group has had a chance to be teacher.

If your performance is rated 80% or above by your peers, then you have completed this element satisfactorily and you may enter the post-assessment.

If you have not achieved a score of 80%, re-enter this activity and try again. If you are still not successful, ask your instructor for suggestions.

ASSESSMENT SCALE A

Since the scale will be used to assess the work of others as well as your own work, it is written in the third person. Consider yourself the "student" when you are rating yourself.

	Check One	
	Yes	No
A. The Setting		
1. Does the student seat herself close to the children during the story time?		
2. Has the student arranged the seating so that all the children can view the illustrations comfortably?		
3. Has the student designed an attractive reading display?		
B. The Reading Process		
1. Does the student read the story without stumbling or hesitating?		
2. Does the student look at the children while reading?		
3. Does the student explain at least one word to the children that he/she thinks may be unfamiliar to them?		
4. Is the student able to read the story at the same time allowing the children to view the illustrations?		
5. Does the student read at a pace that enhances listening?		
6. Does the student hold the children's attention during the reading?		
7. Is the student able to regain the attention of any child who has become distracted during the reading?		

	Check One	
	Yes	No
C. Speech, Voice, and Language		
1. Does the student pronounce his/her words clearly?		
2. Is the student's tone pleasant?		
3. Does the student project his/her voice so as to be heard by all the children?		
4. Does the student follow the rhythm of the language and capture the mood of the story?		
5. Does the student change his/her voice to fit that of the imaginary characters?		
6. Does the student encourage the children to become involved in the story by accepting their contributions, either as remarks or as repetition of common phrases?		
D. Critical Thinking		
1. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the title of the story?		
2. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the plot of the story?		
3. Does the student ask the children to project future happenings in the story?		
4. Does the student ask the children to react to the story?		

POST-ASSESSMENT

If you decided to do the pre-assessment, you are already familiar with the procedures for making a videotape and having it evaluated. If you did not do the pre-assessment, here is the procedure to follow:

Arrange to have a videotape made of you reading a story aloud to children either in the school you teach in, at a day-care center, a library, or wherever it is convenient for you.

Next, meet with your instructor to evaluate your performance. Check off the answers--yes or no--on Assessment Scale A on the following page. Your instructor will also rate you. Each yes answer is worth 5 points. If you and your instructor agree that your score is 80% or above, you have completed the post-assessment satisfactorily and you may exit the module. You will have demonstrated that you now possess the skill that is the terminal objective of this module.

If you did not score 80%, confer with your instructor about re-entering the module.

Now make arrangements for the videotaping. Good luck!

ASSESSMENT SCALE A

Since the scale will be used to assess the work of others as well as your own work, it is written in the third person. Consider yourself the "student" when you are rating yourself.

	Check One	
	Yes	No
A. The Setting		
1. Does the student seat herself close to the children during the story time?		
2. Has the student arranged the seating so that all the children can view the illustrations comfortably?		
3. Has the student designed an attractive reading display?		
B. The Reading Process		
1. Does the student read the story without stumbling or hesitating?		
2. Does the student look at the children while reading?		
3. Does the student explain at least one word to the children that he/she thinks may be unfamiliar to them?		
4. Is the student able to read the story at the same time allowing the children to view the illustrations?		
5. Does the student read at a pace that enhances listening?		
6. Does the student hold the children's attention during the reading?		
7. Is the student able to regain the attention of any child who has become distracted during the reading?		

	Check One	
	Yes	No
C. Speech, Voice, and Language		
1. Does the student pronounce his/her words clearly?		
2. Is the student's tone pleasant?		
3. Does the student project his/her voice so as to be heard by all the children?		
4. Does the student follow the rhythm of the language and capture the mood of the story?		
5. Does the student change his/her voice to fit that of the imaginary characters?		
6. Does the student encourage the children to become involved in the story by accepting their contributions, either as remarks or as repetition of common phrases?		
D. Critical Thinking		
1. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the title of the story?		
2. Does the student provide the children with the opportunity to associate their experiences with the plot of the story?		
3. Does the student ask the children to project future happenings in the story?		
4. Does the student ask the children to react to the story?		

APPENDIX

Answer Key to Assessment Scale B--Element I, Activity 1

Your wording need not be exactly the same as these, but the concepts should be the same. If your answers include concepts not found here, confer with your instructor about their acceptability.

A. Any six of the following are correct.

1. to influence children's literary taste
2. to whet children's appetite for literature
3. to give children pleasure and enjoyment of material that is too difficult for them to read
4. to stimulate children to read
5. to help children enter vicariously into another world
6. to extend children's vocabulary
7. to help children appreciate the beauty of language
8. to amuse the children
9. to reassure the children
10. to stretch children's thinking and doing

B. Any two of the following are correct.

1. you enjoy
2. that meet the needs of the students
3. that are appropriate for the specific moment that occurs

C. Any three of the following are correct.

1. importance of the exact words
2. innate rhythm of the language
3. the style
4. size of the illustrations

D. Any four of the following are correct.

1. dramatize characters
2. create suspense
3. change the mood
4. develop a smashing climax
5. present a surprise ending

E. Both answers must be given.

1. close to you
2. able to see the illustrations

F. Both answers must be given.

1. new words
2. new concepts

G. Any two of the following are correct.

1. mentioning his/her name softly
2. nodding
3. smiling

H. The following answer should be given.

1. pause for a few seconds and continue with the reading

I. Both answers should be given.

1. at a specific time of day set aside for the occasion
2. at a particular moment when the need arises

Answer Key to Assessment Scale C--Element I, Activity 2

A. The three following answers are correct.

1. to look at the children and promote a warm relationship
2. to be able to control any disciplinary behavior before it manifests itself
3. to be able to concentrate on expression

B. The following comment is appropriate.

The voices of the readers are one of the weakest elements in the film. They are not well modulated. In some instances shrill, in others the enunciation is poor. (Any answer that suggests that the voices are not satisfactory is acceptable.)

C. The two following answers are correct.

1. characterization
2. plot

D. The three following answers are correct.

1. story
2. mood
3. games or participation

E. The two following answers are correct.

1. holding the book
2. turning the pages

F. The three following answers are correct.

1. begins with the theme
2. makes conversation
3. counts noses

G. The following answer is appropriate.

"How do you like the book?" is not a good question because a child will answer, "I liked it" or "I didn't like it." Thus, discussion never takes place. However, if the teacher follows the child's response with, "Why did you like it?" or "Why didn't you like it?" that would be fine.

H. The following answer is correct.

1. the children look at the books with the teacher
2. the children select books to take home with them

I. The following answer is correct.

1. 15-20 minutes

J. The following answer is correct.

1. 30 minutes

K. The following answer is correct.

1. 30 children

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HOW TO READ STORIES ALOUD

Everything that has been said about appearance, dramatic simplicity, voice, and diction for storytelling applies also to reading aloud. It must be remembered that one of the most important purposes of reading to children is to make an impact on them—to make them curious about what is inside a book and to feel glad when they have found out. To do this, you must use the power of your voice, intonation, and personal delight to bring the fictional characters to life, to make their problems and frustrations real, to spread the contagion of their joys and triumphs.

Reading to Younger Children

When you read to children you must remember that you have a book between yourself and them. You can easily lose the attention of young children in particular if your own attention is confined to the book. Acquaint yourself with the text in advance. Make maximum use of your voice, intonation, and a dramatic pause if you can anticipate a change in mood, the introduction of a new character, the building up of suspense, a smashing climax, or a surprise ending. You must know the book so well that you can look over it directly into the eyes of the children.

Getting the attention of young children is sometimes a challenge. Teachers have devised many ways of announcing that it is time to change activities: the tinkling of a tiny dinner bell, the soft but penetrating sound of chimes. Some techniques have the solemnity of a ritual—the lighting of a story candle is dramatic enough to signify that something very special is about to happen. Usually, though, a simple announcement of "storytime" is enough to settle the most rambunctious of children.

There are some stories that begin with first sentences so startling or intriguing that no introduction is needed. "Rose Birnbaum hurried down the street, clutching an overflowing shopping bag in one arm and four rolls of wallpaper in the other. She was on her way to visit her son Bernard, the detective, and give him some chicken soup" (*Inspector Rose* by Ben Shecter). Obviously, such sentences provide their own introduction. Although you do not have to "sell" a book to children already interested in reading, a dramatic or tantalizing introduction will not be wasted on them. You must think of those children who have resisted the attractions of books and those who are still diffident. An introductory question or comment can often build up an anticipation that will last until the story is well on its way. The first sentence of *Mr. Popper's Penguins*, for example, gives no clue to the hilarious adventures to follow. One teacher introduces it by asking, "Have you ever heard of a pet that lives in a refrigerator?" The children, intrigued by pets anyway, usually respond scornfully, "In a *refrigerator!*" If the children start guessing what kind of pet it will be, the teacher usually lets it go on until someone guesses penguins or until she senses that too

much delay will dissipate their initial curiosity.

A librarian who usually tells and reads folk tales sensitizes children to style by asking, "Do all stories begin, 'Once upon a time'? Here is one that doesn't," and goes on to read, "It is the dead of night. The old farm lies fast asleep and everyone inside the house is sleeping too." And so *The Tomten* by Astrid Lindgren is launched.

If the book to be read is a picture story, it is essential that the children be comfortably seated as close to you as possible. This will avoid craning necks and a chorus of "I can't see!" Hold the book with the pictures facing the children so that everyone can see them. This can be done easily with such glorious picture stories as *The Story About Ping, Curious George, Petunia, The Happy Lion,* or *Madeline,* because the text is so simple and direct that an upside-down clue is all you will need. If the text is longer, then hold the book to one side, with the pictures still in view. You can take a long look at the text while the children study the pictures.

Children may love one book because it is funny, another because they can see themselves in the characters. By being clear about the needs that literature can help satisfy, you will find the task of selecting books to read aloud much simpler. By being clear about the chief appeal of a particular book, you will be better able to use your voice and facial expression to heighten that appeal.

Reading books to amuse. After a hard work session there is nothing like a funny book to refresh and revitalize a group. Although there is no hard-and-fast rule to help one predict what children will think is funny, stories of mischief are always safe choices.

The mischief of *Curious George* is not only hilarious but innocent. Once children understand what *curious* means and how George's curiosity gets him into trouble, they begin to chuckle with anticipation. When you notice this happening, you can use the "pause" to prolong the delicious suspense. Allowing time for speculation on what is to come is effective if it does not go on too long and if it can be kept within some limits by the text. Aimless speculation is time-consuming and rarely accurate.

Young children may be introduced to grave nonsense with Russell Hoban's *The Sorely Trying Day.* Although they may not understand all of the words, they will recognize with quiet amusement the common phenomenon of passing the blame and telling half the truth. You should be sure that the class understands what "sorely trying" means. Then they will understand Father's irritation with the uproar in the house when he returns from "a sorely trying day."

Reading books to reassure. As a child grows and encounters varieties of human behavior, his as well as that of others, he finds much that is curious and sometimes bewildering. There are many books available that deal with situations and feelings very familiar to young children. If a child hears these stories and is assured that the characters in stories behave much the same as he does, he may begin to acquire a faith in literature as a source of explanations of more complicated situations and feelings.

In Russell Hoban's *Bedtime for Frances,* Frances, though a little badger, is definitely human in the ploys she thinks of to put off going to bed and staying there—a familiar situation to children. Her struggle to stay up ends suddenly when the "smack and whack" of a moth's wings against the window pane remind her of a spanking. Then, "All of a sudden she was tired. She lay down and closed her eyes so she could think better." There is no need for you to draw any parallels between Frances' experience and real life; you will see that the children have done it themselves by the knowing, somewhat sheepish smiles on their faces.

Maurice Sendak in his *Where the Wild Things Are* effectively puts chains around another night fear—monsters. Children love

this book—perhaps because they empathize with a boy who conquers the monsters with such casual aplomb. You should allow enough time for children to study the details of the exquisitely ugly beasts and keep the book in the classroom for individuals to pore over later.

A storm with lightning and thunder can really disrupt a classroom. The brave children will rush to the windows to watch it and the fearful ones will stay glued to their seats. In this situation Charlotte Zolotow's *The Storm Book* would be a good one to read. It is the story of a storm and of a little boy's wondering questions. The violence of the storm is vividly described, but in sharp contrast are the mother's quiet, gentle, simple explanations.

When you read stories that portray real situations and concerns in fictional form, the reading should be straight and unforced. If there is a message there for children they will receive it. This is especially true when reading stories that treat such delicate themes as size, loss of a pet, and death. Some teachers prefer not to read such stories as Jerrold Beim's *The Smallest Boy in the Class*, because the child who is the smallest is extremely sensitive to the fact; others feel that reading such a book aloud to the entire class may alter the attitudes of those who pick on him. Taro Yashima treats the subject more subtly in *Crow Boy*.

Reading to stretch thinking and doing. By reading a few of the beginning-reading books, you may snare the reluctant readers. By reading Crosby Bonsall's *The Case of the Cat's Meow*, you may capture the interest of others with a type of fiction that fascinates everyone—the mystery. You would do well to have copies of other Bonsall books as well. Second-graders might be ready for *Basil and the Pygmy Cats* by Eve Titus.

Another type of literature that children should be exposed to is the fanciful tale. Although you should not saturate very young children with fanciful and folk tales, you should read a few. You might find, as one first-grade teacher did, that their simple plots make it possible for children to notice similarities in different versions. The teacher had read Esphyr Slobodkina's *Caps for Sale*. A peddler of caps fell asleep under a tree. When he awoke, his caps had been stolen by monkeys. In his rage, he shook his finger and his fists and stamped his foot; the monkeys out of reach in the tree merely imitated him. Exasperated, he threw his cap to the ground. And so did the monkeys. Some weeks later, the teacher read Mary Hemingway's *The Old Man and the Monkeys*. The children saw that although this story was set in China, the old man's hats were straw, and he threw a pine cone at the monkeys, the stories were the same. Certainly a mind-stretching experience for seven-year-olds.

From an article by Kay Vandergrift in the book Using Literature with Young Children, Leland Jacobs, editor (Teachers College Press, 1965)

Reading aloud to young children

Those who read to children accept both a wonderful opportunity and a fair-sized responsibility. For through reading aloud to young children one can share the joy and wonder of broadening acquaintances in the world of books and whet their appetites for more stories and poems as well as influence—hopefully—their literary tastes that will last a lifetime.

Through reading aloud, the reader re-creates for children not only their own world seen through other eyes but leads them, also, to worlds beyond the eye. Reading aloud is a way to let children enter, vicariously, into a larger world—both real and fanciful—in company with an adult who cares enough to take them on the literary journey.

Since the child's introduction to books is controlled by adult choices, books of quality, varied in style and text, should be his to know. These books will undoubtedly be beyond his present reading ability; however, reading aloud enables him to enjoy and appreciate what he could not manage on his own. Moreover, it probably extends his vocabulary; develops fond memories of stories and poems; gives him a feeling for the beauty of language; and arouses a desire to read on his part. He comes to know man's experiences in many situations, places, and activities. And he has only to give himself to the listening.

How much better it is for the young one to sit back and enjoy listening to *Winnie the Pooh* or "The Elephant's Child" rather than struggle with Milne's sentence structure or Kipling's vocabulary. The warmth of the reader's voice and his ability to highlight and give substance to the

selection not only facilitate the child's interpretation of the story, but at the same time serve as a model and an incentive for his own reading.

SELECTING STORIES AND POEMS

Selection is not, basically, a matter of paging through available books shortly before the reading time or even of choosing starred titles from standard reading lists. One who truly delights in fine literature for children and is sincerely concerned with the young children with whom he works will continually be alert for prose and poetry which he himself enjoys and which will be, according to his insights, right for his particular group of children. As he comes to know these children, he will be able to anticipate certain concerns and reactions and build a collection of stories to meet these needs. There is a thrill in sharing a story or poem related to a specific incident immediately as it occurs as well as in appropriately opening up the wonders of a world that is new and potentially appealing.

Any story worthy of the time spent in reading should offer something of significance to the listeners. Perhaps the teacher is merely filling a gap in the day's activities, but one need not fill it with the mediocre. Some selections will undoubtedly be read for informational content; these too must be judged with an eye to their literary quality. Even though a book presents facts, if it does not do so in a clearly superior manner, a teacher is probably better off depending upon his own presentation.

Frequently a story will have certain inherent qualities which are better shared through reading aloud than through storytelling. Many picture-story books should be read rather than told, since the illustrations are an integral part of the story. Other stories call for the exact words or style of the author or for a certain innate rhythm which might be lost in the telling. Most storytellers are able to entrance a young audience with their own telling of the action of *The Three Billy Goats Gruff*, but who would dare to compete with Seuss' own telling of *Horton Hatches the Egg*?

These inherent qualities are especially important in poetry. Imagine "telling" a poem to children. Whether a poem is memorized or interpretatively read, one must present it as it is, for it is not only the verbal statement that is important, but the exact phrasing and a singing quality of rhythm, and perhaps rhyme, as well.

Gradually, as children become familiar with the literature that is their heritage, they will begin to make their own selections for the story hour. Along with those books chosen by the adult, they may ask to return to the familiar settings or the strong rhythms and repetitions of a story or poem enjoyed previously.

PREPARATION FOR READING

The best preparation for anyone who reads to children is not only to know the story well, but to enjoy it thoroughly and to feel strongly about it. Thoughtful silent reading will familiarize him with the sequence of events, the mood and tempo of the story, and the author's distinctive vocabulary. Then reading aloud will enable him to adjust the expression, the timing, and the emphasis to his own voice quality. One just beginning to read to others will find it especially valuable to listen to his own voice on tape before facing a young audience.

As one prepares for reading aloud to young children, he needs to take into account the mood, viewpoint, and spirit he wishes to establish in his reading, as well as how he will pace his presentation. Too, he will want to consider how to prepare the children to anticipate a "believe" or "make believe" situation, and what, if any, follow-up discussion or other activities he plans to use. However, no amount of preparation can make up for a lack of sincerity on the part of the reader. That which is read with feeling will almost always be listened to with respect.

PROVIDING A SUITABLE SETTING

Once the story is chosen and prepared, the reader must select a suitable setting for its presentation. There might be a "story corner" or some area set aside for the reading and telling of stories. This could be an informal and comfortable area—possibly a few pillows arranged on the floor, a fluffy rug, or a rocking chair—where children can relax and enjoy literature. Most youngsters relish a bit of ritual with their story hour, perhaps the lighting of a "story candle" or a certain quiet time each day when they can expect to share a story with the entire group. Although it may be wise to set aside this time free from interruptions, this should not be the only time literature is shared, nor should it become inflexible. Those "occasional" stories selected for the children may find their way into any part of the day, and even the scheduled story hour varies with the particular book, the interests of the children, and the total plans of the day.

USE OF PICTURES IN READING

As mentioned previously, many picture books demand that children be able to follow the illustrations as the text is read to them. It is important that the reader learn to hold these oversized books comfortably, so the pictures are easily seen as he reads. He may point out certain details as they are mentioned in the story if this does not disturb the children's

viewing or sidetrack attention from the selection. Since the pictures are an integral part of the story, listeners need to digest these as well as the text. Sufficient time is needed to take them in. Thus, a book which could literally be "read" in a minute or two may require much more time when it is really "read" to young children.

Only pictures that are large, clear, and easily seen should be used with a whole group. It is far better for the listener to conjure up his own images than to strain to see those shown by the reader. Wanda Gág's *Millions of Cats* is a delight to see, but the illustrations are too small and detailed to be absorbed in a group situation. With this particular book, it might be advisable to show the filmstrip as the text is read and save the book itself for reading to one or two children.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE READING ITSELF

"Reading Aloud" time has come. An unhurried atmosphere is established. Listeners are seated comfortably on low chairs or pillows where their faces can be seen as well as the book. The reader has prepared the group for those new words or concepts necessary for the understanding of the story. He reads. Although just a bit slower than normal speech, the tone is that of a relaxed conversationalist. Dramatic passages are interpreted naturally and different characters speak with slightly different voices, but there is no overacting. During the reading, a parenthetical phrase may be added as the reader notes puzzlement on young faces, but he doesn't stop to explain while telling the story.

Entering into the story, children may begin to laugh or make comments about the action. These are acknowledged by a smile or a nod and the slight pause required in the reading. The child whose attention is beginning to wander can often be drawn back into the group by that smile or by softly mentioning his name. The reader's enjoyment of his story is evident; his listeners share that enjoyment with him.

The story ends; the children go back to the day's activities. But sometime later one may find that reading together isn't something that is finished when the final page has been read. The book is closed, but the world found there remains. Long afterward a phrase or a gesture may take one back to live again in that world and share anew the pleasures of "Once upon a time . . ." or "On a snowy city street . . ."